



WFP Niger Country Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Proposal to the Government of Belgium

Country:	Niger
Executing Agency	World Food Programme Niger
Project Title:	Country Strategic Plan (2020-2024); Strategic Outcome 6: Humanitarian and development partners in Niger have access to common services and expertise that give them access to and enable them to operate in targeted areas until appropriate and sustainable alternatives are available
Total Budget of Proposal:	EUR 500,000
Project sites:	12 months

1. Description of the context

The escalating violence and insecurity in neighbouring countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, and Nigeria) have resulted in an increase in refugees and internal displacement in the regions of Tahoua (bordering Mali), Tillabéri (bordering both Mali and Burkina Faso), Diffa (bordering with Lake Chad) and Maradi (at the border with Nigeria). The increased attacks by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) in Niger represent an aggravating factor of the vulnerabilities of displaced populations already suffering from recurrent food insecurity, and malnutrition, whose livelihoods and economic activities are being weakened and their access to agro-pastoral production areas limited. As of October 2021, some 264,000 persons across Niger are internally displaced. On top of that, the country is also hosting 250,000 refugees (primarily from Mali and Nigeria)¹.

The insecurity situation that characterizes Niger hampers the general effectiveness of the provision of assistance and the accessibility of the most remote communities. In these conditions, UNHAS air service represents the only safe way to reach remote areas of the country to provide the much-needed assistance to vulnerable beneficiaries and remains the most reliable, flexible, and cost-effective option for transporting humanitarian cargo and personnel in the country. The effectiveness and efficiency of UNHAS Niger operations is constantly monitored through the Performance Management Tool (PMT).

2. Needs analysis

Immense distances and inadequate road infrastructure in Niger make overland travel a challenge for humanitarian actors to reach the affected population. In addition, safe, and reliable air service providers in the country are restricted. Even though Niger airlines and TAMARA Aviation are active in the territory, with limited scheduled flights or charter flights upon request throughout the country, they are not approved by UNDSS for UN staff travel for security reasons.

¹ UNHCR data

The provision of air services to the humanitarian community is a logistics component of the Niger Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), which is elaborated by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). According to the HRP, UNHAS is crucial to allow humanitarian organizations access to people in need, transport cargo to remote locations and provide capacity for MEDEVAC and SEDEVAC of staff. In addition, UNHAS contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 - Partnership for the Goals (to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development).

In Niger, UNHAS continues to be a critical service to enable the whole humanitarian community to reach vulnerable communities in remote areas of the country, by serving seven destinations on a regular basis with two Niamey-based fixed-wing aircraft including Niamey, Tahoua, Agadez, Dirkou, Diffa, Maradi and Zinder.

Flights are operated under a partial cost recovery system and are expected to generate 28% of budgetary requirements in 2022. The applicable nominal fees range from USD 150 to USD 400 per passenger depending on the route. The projected cost recovery amount is monitored monthly. Considering cost recovery, UNHAS activities in Niger are fully funded until the end of August 2022.

3. Description of the Project

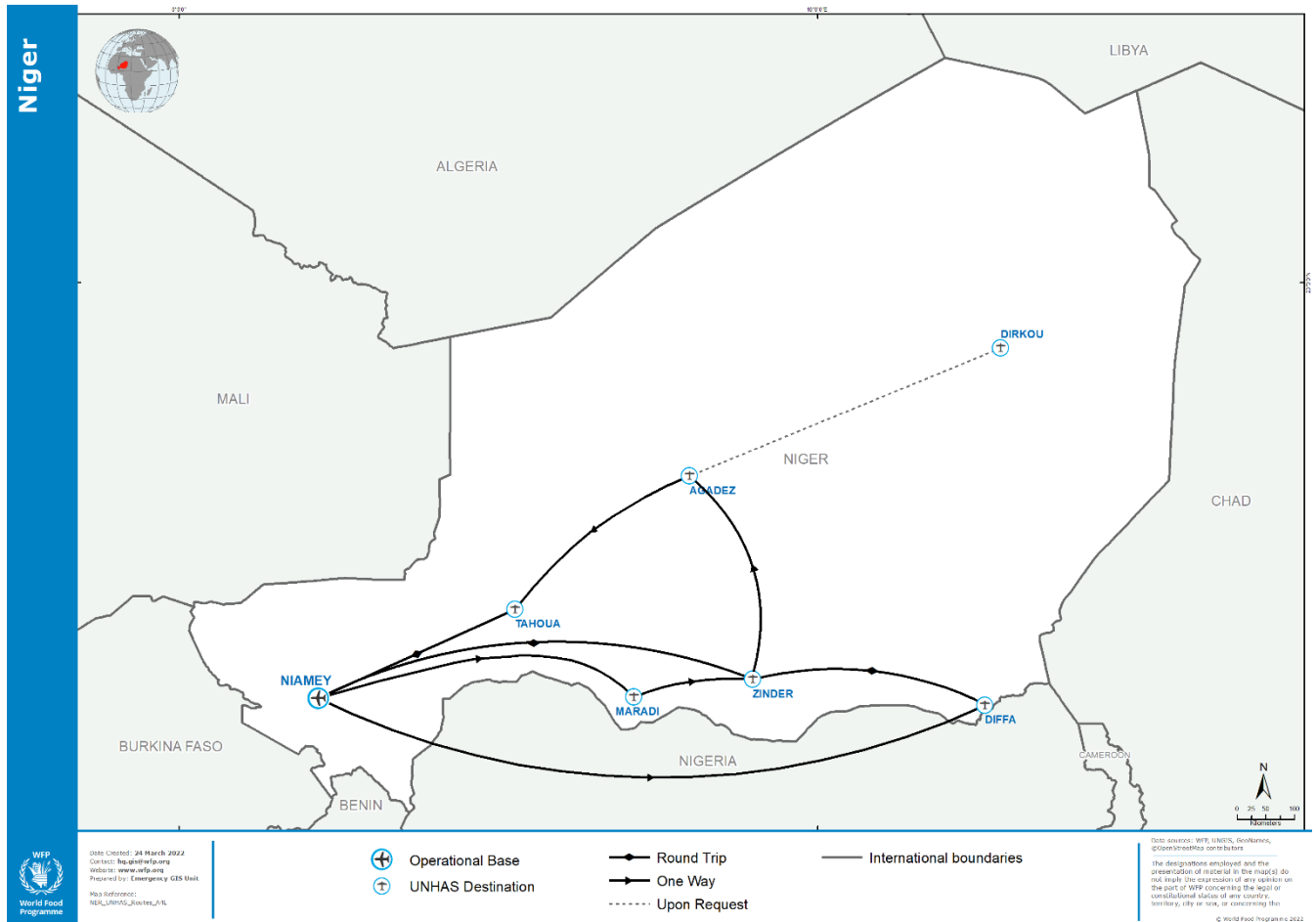
The main objective of UNHAS Niger is to provide safe and reliable flight services to partners to facilitate access to areas of humanitarian interventions. Specific objectives can be summarized as follows:

- To offer NGOs, United Nations agencies, donor organizations and diplomatic missions in Niger safe, effective, and efficient access to project sites in remote and hard-to-reach locations.
- To provide adequate capacity for evacuations (Medical evacuations (MEDEVAC) of Security relocations (SEDEVAC)) of humanitarian staff, including non-critical COVID-19 infected passengers in the context of the ongoing pandemic, from remote locations to main cities with medical facilities.
- To facilitate maintenance and rehabilitation of airfields used by UNHAS aircraft to ensure direct access to the most remote locations all year and the safety of the passengers, crew members, and the aircraft.
- To transport light cargo such as medical supplies and samples, high energy food and information and communications technology (ICT) equipment where commercial air services are not available.
- To build and strengthen the capacity of civil aviation authorities, local government institutions, user agencies and other humanitarian aviation service providers to encourage safe, efficient, and cost-effective operations.

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MAP 2 - UNHAS routes:



UNHAS Niger fleet is composed of two 35-seat aircraft: one Dash8-100 (propeller aircraft) and one Embraer 135 (jet aircraft). The flight frequency has increased from three to four times a week as of November 2021. There is also a new airport in Tillabéri city awaiting the official opening by the Civil Aviation Authorities. Once functional, this airport could represent an additional destination for UNHAS, thus increasing the coverage across the country. UNHAS will continue to shift locations served as needed.

In 2021 UNHAS supported the implementation of a fire truck in Diffa Airport, financing 70% of its implementation costs for a total of USD 55,000. The presence of the fire truck and the maintenance implemented during 2021 thanks to the SUMMA Construction Engineers transported by UNHAS, made it possible for the Airport in Diffa to pass from Military Airport category to Civilian category 4 airport. This means that from September 2021, the airport in Diffa is able to host civil flights. Moreover, UNHAS is now able to land in Diffa with the new Embraer 135, a jet aircraft, much faster than the Dash8-100, cutting the flight times between Niamey and Diffa from 2,50h (with the Dash8-100) to only 1,45h.

UNHAS maintains a flexible, demand-driven flight schedule. In a cost-efficient manner, UNHAS conducts flight rotations with multiple stops, serving several flight destinations in one go. The major destinations have some of the lowest cost per passenger kilometre. The number of rotations and the frequency by which a destination is served is done in close consideration of user demands and resource availability. Flight schedules, user demand, strategic orientation, and other issues are regularly discussed with the User Group Committee (UGC)

and the Steering Committee (SC)– the latter consisting of representatives and Country Directors of United Nations agencies, donor representatives, NGOs and chaired by the humanitarian coordinator.

UNHAS also conducts special flights on a partial or full-cost recovery basis upon request. In order to proceed with medical evacuations, two stretchers can be installed in the Dash8-100 aircraft for patients who need to be horizontally stabilized. Needs for humanitarian activities are discussed with all UNHAS users during a users group meeting, bilateral meetings are conducted regularly to support organizations initiatives and missions and a steering committee is organized with main stakeholders and donors to establish operational modality and funding.

From 15 to 22 January 2022 the Embraer 135 went on maintenance. During this time UNHAS operated with one aircraft. Also, on accounts of bad weather during the Harmattan season leading to poor visibility and technical challenges, more than 40 flights were cancelled between January and May 2022. In the same timeframe, UNHAS transported 5,675 passengers and 12.2 Mt of light cargo.

4. Programme Implementation and Coordination

UNHAS supports about 160 user organisations currently present in the country to assist the population. In 2021, out of the total user organizations, 78% are NGOs, 17% are UN agencies and 5% are diplomats. OCHA's database of humanitarian entities in each country allows UNHAS to select eligible organizations that may be interested in registering as users. All organizations meeting OCHA criteria have access to UNHAS Services.

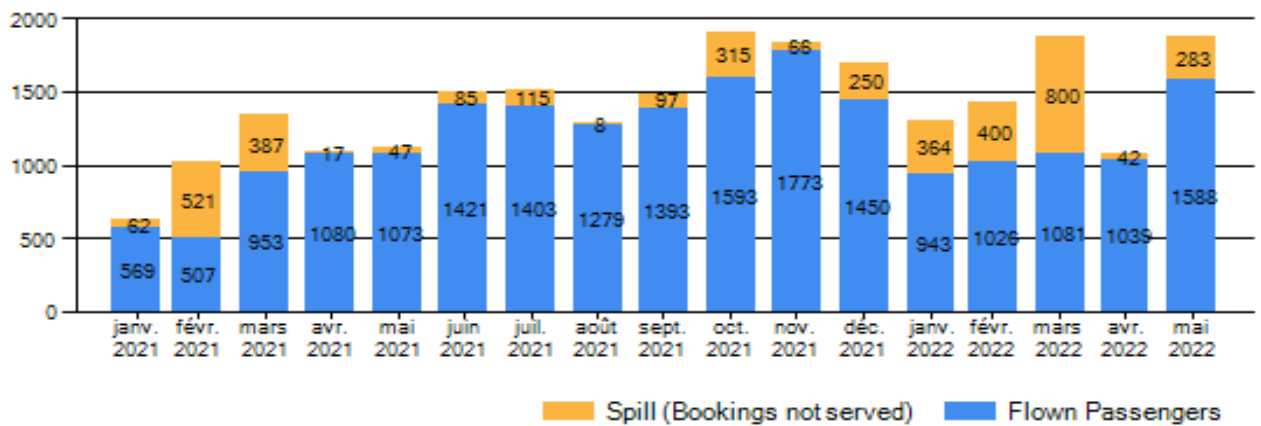
UNHAS works closely with relevant government counterparts to enhance the technical capacities of civil aviation personnel through various trainings, including through the Safety Management System.

UNHAS maintains strong relations with the Civil Aviation Authorities and other local and regional authorities such as the ASECNA with various services including air navigation control, aircraft guidance, traffic and weather forecast information, and airport infrastructure maintenance. ASECNA continued to be the only authorized structure for these services in West Africa.

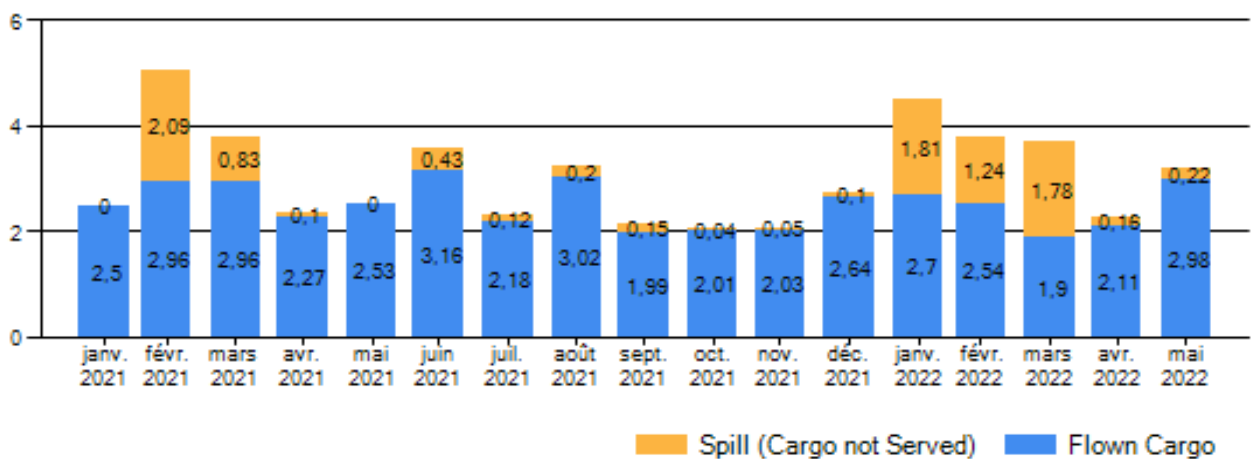
As an enabler of humanitarian assistance, UNHAS aligns its services with the needs of user organizations expressed in user group meetings, and access satisfaction surveys. Government officials have access to UNHAS services through a waiting list, taking into consideration the priority of the other user organizations. When operating in areas with access and security concerns (notably Tahoua, Agadez, Diffa and Dirkou), UNHAS collaborates with OCHA, UNDSS, UN agencies and NGOs, the United Nations Humanitarian Country Team (UNHCT) and the Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (CIMCoord) to coordinate movements and share information regarding potential threats to aid delivery and the safety and security of beneficiaries and humanitarian staff.

The two tables below provide a breakdown of passengers and cargo transported by UNHAS from January 2021 to May 2022.

Traffic



Traffic



To note that in June 2022 (not featured on the tables above) UNHAS Niger transported 1,816 passengers and 2.5MT of light cargo in June 2022. For the passengers flown in June, this represents a best new record since the beginning of UNHAS operation in 2008.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

UNHAS assessments and methodologies are standardized at the corporate level within WFP. In order to determine the air transport needs of the humanitarian community, a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis has been conducted and will continue to be conducted on a regular basis. The role of UNHAS activities is guided by user demands and expressed needs. Assessments are conducted through one or a combination of the following activities:

- UNHAS User Group Committee (UGC) meetings composed of NGOs, UN agencies and Donor Representatives. The role of the UGC is administrative and provides feedback to UNHAS' Chief Air Transport Officer (CATO) to help ensure high service quality. The UGC is used as a forum where the users of the service can voice their views on operational matters, including suggestions as regards destinations or other changes to the weekly flight schedule.
- Periodic Steering Group Committee meetings chaired by the Humanitarian Coordinator and composed of some representatives from INGOs, UN Agencies and Donors to define operational requirements and air

transport priorities, also to discuss topics of a strategic nature such as funding and give guidance on UNHAS policies.

- Two types of surveys are conducted each year: one is a "Passenger satisfaction survey" which is directed to UNHAS passengers; the second one is about "provision of access" directed to Heads of Agencies.

Furthermore, UNHAS will continue to engage pro-actively with NGOs, and attend NGOs forum / Logistics Cluster and other relevant meetings when applicable.

The operation will monitor passenger and cargo traffic using the Performance Management Tool (PMT). With the PMT, trends can be visualized, and the level of performance established so as to identify strategic and operational areas for improvement.

Flight schedules and the operational fleet will be adjusted if required through feedback from users at UGC and SC meetings, surveys (Passenger Satisfaction and Provision of Access Satisfaction), as well as day-to-day monitoring of operational statistics to ensure that user demands are met. Operational constraints such as allowable flight duty time (maximum number of flight hours allowed per Pilot per week/month), maintenance programming, airstrip conditions, weather conditions, etc., will also be taken into consideration during aircraft tasking.

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The overall Objective of UNHAS is to support the humanitarian response by enabling access to populations in need.

Outcome	Outcome Definition	Indicators	Targets 2022
➤ Outcome 1	Enhance access to the beneficiaries and project implementation sites through safe, effective, and efficient passenger air transport service.	User satisfaction rate (in percentage)	90%
		Total number of passengers transported monthly (ticketed passengers)	1,400
		Percentage of passengers served against requested	95%
➤ Outcome 2	Improve delivery of light humanitarian cargo such as medical supplies, high energy foods and ICT equipment.	The total volume of light cargo transported per month (mt)	2.5
➤ Outcome 3	Increased timely response to medical and security evacuations for the humanitarian community.	Percentage response to duly requested medical	100%

		and security evacuations	
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6. Reporting and visibility

Reporting: WFP publishes the Annual Country Report (ACR) by the end of the first quarter every year for each of its operations. As such, this contribution will be officially reported in the 2022 and 2023 ACR, expected to be published in March 2023 and March 2024 respectively. The ACR is the principal means through which WFP informs donors of how resources for given projects were obtained, utilised, and accounted for during the preceding year. The report will be available at the following address: <https://www.wfp.org/operations>.

WFP also disseminates monthly country briefs, external situation reports and external dashboards that showcase current achievements, challenges and needs pertaining to WFP's assistance to its beneficiaries in Niger. Regular updates are also available on <https://www.wfp.org/countries/Niger>

Representatives from the Government of Belgium may also be kept informed of the evolution of WFP operations in Niger through exchanges or bilateral meetings with WFP at the country level as well as the facilitation of field visits upon request.

Visibility: WFP is committed to pursuing its donor visibility strategy to acknowledge the contribution and thank the people of Belgium for their generosity. WFP will aim to ensure visibility for the Belgian Government's funding, and demonstrate its impact, through various media platforms, regular local donor bulletins and annual reports. The logo of the Government of Belgium will be placed on WFP reports and all visibility materials, as appropriate, along with other donors. Banners and posters with donor logos will be displayed on WFP leaflets to ensure that beneficiaries are aware of the assistance provided by the Government of Belgium.

- **Social media posts:** posts will tag Belgium's official accounts on social media and will range from photos to infographics to videos. The aim of the posts will be to convey Belgium's contributions in a human-centric way, bringing forward stories that do not necessarily always mention assistance directly but instead focus on humanising communities by amplifying their voices and featuring 'relatable' narratives. Posts on announcing and acknowledging the contribution will also be made.
- **Media mentions:** Belgium's contributions will be mentioned when conducting media interviews (if and when possible).
- **Field visits:** organizing joint visits to specific sites across Niger, whether simply with donors or with media accompanying the team. However, the sensitivity of the situation in Niger (e.g., conflicts) must be taken into consideration before moving forward with any on-site visits and visibility.
- **On-site visibility:** The Government of Belgium's logo will be placed on visibility materials as appropriate, including on food parcels along with other donors.

Support from the Government of Belgium will also be highlighted in the abovementioned communication channels, when appropriate. WFP will also provide visibility photographs and beneficiary stories to the Embassy of Belgium.

7. Budget

The annual budget for 2022 stands at USD 10.7 million, however, due to the recent increase of JET A1 fuel prices (39% increase since January 2022), the annual budget for 2022 could eventually increase. Out of the total amount needed, UNHAS Niger is requesting EUR 500,000 from Belgium to cover its operational needs beyond August 2022.

Below is the breakdown budget for the EUR 500,000

Budget code	NE02.08.061.CPA1		
Amount	500 000,00 EUR	526 870,39 USD	
	Cost Category	Total in EURO	Total in USD
	Operational costs		
	Staff / Personal	54 593,21	57 527,09
	Aircraft Costs	228 629,53	240 916,26
	Other Direct Operational Costs	157 565,61	166 033,31
	Total Operational Costs	440 788,35	464 476,66
	Implementation Cost	11 769,55	12 402,05
	Direct Support Costs	16 925,67	17 835,26
	Indirect Support Costs 6,5%	30 516,43	32 156,41
	Total	500 000,00	526 870,39
	Parité : USD = 0,949 Euro		